

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 NIC-01 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4050

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USEC BRUSSELS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 26980

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR,, XF, FR

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON MIDDLE EAST

1. SUMMARY. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON GOF MDDLE EAST
POLICY SCHEDULED FOR LATE AFTERNOON OCT 17. FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT WILL

DEFEND GOF FRANCE POLICIES AGAINST ATTACKS FROM CENTRIST AND SOCIALIST

OPPOSITION. BOTH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION COALITION SPLIT ON
ARAB-ISRAELI WAR, AND DEBATE, PARTICULARLY JOBERT'S REMARKS,
SHOULD REVEAL EXTENT TO WHICH INTERNAL PRESSURES LIKELY TO IN-
FLUENCE GOF POLICIES. END SUMMARY

2. DEBATE RESULTS FROM "ORAL QUESTION"POSED BY CENTER
OPPOSITION GROUP IN ASSEMBLY (REFORMERS). SPEAKERS FROM ALL SIX
POLITICAL GROUPS IN ASSEMBLY ALLOTTED TIME IN DEBATE,
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WHICH FONMIN MINISTER JOBERT WILL CONCLUDE WITH STATEMENT

AND DEFENSE OF GOF MIDDLE EAST POLICIES. UNDER ASSEMBLY
PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ORAL QUESTIONS, THERE WILL BE NO REPEAT
NO VOTE OF APPROVAL OR CENSURE.

3. DEBATE EXPECTED TO REVEAL DEEP SPLITS WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND
OPPOSITION COALITION. WITHIN GOVERNMENT COALITION, SMALL
MINORITIES ARE GROUPED AROUND EXTREME PRO-ARAB OR PRO-
ISRAELI POLES OF ATTRACTION. HARD-LINE GAULLISTS TEND TO BE
PRO-ARAB WHILE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS AND CENTER UNION DEPUTIES
TEND TO FAVOR ISRAELIS. (THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE: NEWLY-
ELECTED UDR SECRETARY GENERAL ALEXANDRE SANGUINETTI, A HARD
LINE GAULLIST ON MOST ISSUES, IS KNOWN TO HAVE STRONG PRO-
ISRAELI SYMPATHIES). IN-BETWEEN TWO EXTREMES, MAJORITY OF
GOVERNMENT COALITION DEPUTIES ARE AWARE THAT SUBSTANTIAL
ECONOMIC BENEFITS FLOW FROM PRO-ARAB POSTURE, APPROVE OF GOF
"INDEPENDENCE" FROM TWO MAJOR BLOCS ON MIDDLE EAST, AND HOPE
THAT FRANCE CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT MEDIATORY ROLE IN RESOLVING
THE CONFLICT. AT THE SAME TIME, MOST OF THEM WISH THAT FRANCE
COULD ACHIEVE THESE RESULTS WHILE SHOWING MORE EVEN-HANDEDNESS
IN RELATONS WITH ISRAEL AND THE ARAB STATES.

4. WITHIN THE OPPOSITION, COMMUNISTS (NOT SURPRISINGLY)
AND FAR LEFT WING OF SOCIALIST PARTY ARE UNABASHEDLY PRO-ARAB.
THE LEFT-WING SOCIALISTS, WHO REPRESENT ABOUT 30PERCENT
OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, ARE PRO-ARAB PARTLY BECAUSE
OF SENTIMENTAL ATTACHEMENT TO THE UNDERDOG AND PARTLY
BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION TO "IMPERIALIST" US POLICIES AROUND
THE WORLD. BUT THE
GREAT MAJORITY OF SOCIALIST PARTY DEPUTIES AND THEIR HANDFUL OF
POLITICAL ALLIES, THE LEFT RADICALS, ARE EITHER OUTSPOKENLY PRO-
ISRAELI, AS FOR EXAMPLE, SOCIALIST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY GROUP
PRESIDENT AND MAYOR OF MARSEILLE, GASTON DEFERRE, OR MODERATELY
FAVORABLE TO THE ISRAELI CAUSE. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT GOLDA MEIR
WAS SOCIALIST LEADER FRANCOIS MITTERRAND'S GUEST DURING LAST
FEBRUARY'S SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN
PARIS.

5. COMMENT: MIDDLE EAST WAR HAS ILLUNINATED THE CRACKS AND
FISSURES IN FRENCH POLITICAL COALITIONS AND HAS AGAIN REVEALED THE
FRAGILITY OF POST-DE GAULLE FRENCH POLITICAL SYSTEM. HOWEVER
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BARRING A DRAMATIC TURN IN THE WAR--FOR EXAMPLE, SHOULD THE ARAB
ARMIES APPEAR ON THE VERGE OF CRUSHING ISRAEL, OR SHOULD
IRREFUTABLE PROOF SHOW LIBYAN MIRAGE JETS ENGAGED IN BATTLE -- WE
WOULD NOT EXPECT DISCENSION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT COALITION
OR SOCIALIST PARTY OPPOSITION TO CREATE PRESSURES STRONG
ENOUGH TO CAUSE GOF TO MODIFY SUBSTANTIALLY ITS CURRENT PRO-
ARAB POSTURE. FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT'S PERFORMANCE ON OCT-
OBER 17, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE VERY CAREFULLY STUDIED AS A MEASURE

OF THE IMPACT INTERNAL PRESSURES LIKELY TO HAVE ON GOF POLICY.
ACCORDING QUAI CONTACTS, JOBERT TAKING EXCPEPTIONAL PAINS TO
PREPARE FOR DEBATE. GDSIRWIN

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